

REMARKS

Claims 1-40, 42 and 43 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 13, 22, 29, 42, and 43 have been amended as shown on pp. 2, 4, and 5 of the Reply.

Applicant's representative thanks Examiner Hicks for the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview conducted on April 26, 2007. During the interview a set of proposed amendments was agreed upon that addressed the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, 35 U.S.C. §102(b), and 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 2-4 Under 35 U.S.C §112

Claims 2-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Independent claim 1 has been amended to re-add the antecedent basis for the limitation "the criteria" recited in dependent claim 2. It is therefore requested that this rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 2, and claims 3-4 which depend there from.

II. Rejection of Claims 1-3 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Lawrence. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Lawrence fails to teach or suggest each and every aspect of the subject claims.

A single prior art reference anticipates a patent claim only if it expressly or inherently describes *each and every* limitation set forth in the patent claim. *Trintec Industries, Inc. v. Top-U.S.A. Corp.*, 295 F.3d 1292, 63 USPQ2d 1597 (Fed. Cir. 2002); *See Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim. *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

The subject claims provide systems and methods for refining the search query results

from a general-purpose search engine based in part on the entry point through which the general-purpose search engine was accessed. When the general-purpose search engine is accessed via an entry point and a search query is executed, the search query results obtained by the general-purpose search engine are passed to a tuning component associated with the entry point. The tuning component filters and ranks the search query results according to a statistical analysis that utilizes both relevant and non-relevant data sets associated with the entry point. In particular, amended independent claim 1 (and similarly independent claims 13, 22, 29, 34, 42, and 43) recites *a tuning component **that receives search query results of the general-purpose search engine and filters the search results** based on criteria associated with the entry point through which the general-purpose search engine was accessed.*

The Office Action dated February 28, 2007, contends that by referencing the Inquirus 2 metasearch engine, Lawrence discloses a tuning component that filters search query results of a general-purpose search engine based on an entry point. Applicant's representative respectfully disagrees with this contention. Inquirus 2 utilizes context information provided by a user to modify a search *query* prior to submitting the query to a general-purpose search engine, and to select the search engines to which the query will be sent. However, no context-based filtering is performed on the resulting set of search query *results* obtained by the general-purpose search engine. Describing the architecture of Inquirus 2, Lawrence explains that "Inquirus 2 takes a query plus context information, and attempts to use the context information to find relevant documents via regular web search engines. The context information is used *to select the search engines to send queries to, to modify queries, and to select the ordering policy.*" Lawrence is silent regarding a tuning component that *filters search query **results*** obtained by the general-purpose search engine.

In view of at least the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that Lawrence does not teach or suggest applicant's claimed subject matter as recited in independent claim 1 (and claims 2-3 which depend there from), and thus fails to anticipate the subject claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 4-40 and 42-43 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 4-40 and 42-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawrence in view of Hansen, et al. ("Using navigation data to improve IR functions in the

context of Web search”, Proceedings of the tenth international conference on information and knowledge management; Atlanta, Georgia, USA; Pages 135-142; ACM Press, 2001 and referred to hereinafter as Hansen). It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Lawrence and Hansen *et al.*, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every aspect of the subject claims.

To reject claims in an application under §103, an examiner must establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. A *prima facie* case of obviousness is established by a showing of three basic criteria. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, **the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. See MPEP §706.02(j).** The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant’s disclosure. See *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

The subject claims disclose a filtering component that receives search query results obtained by a general-purpose search engine. This filtering component utilizes sets of training data associated with the entry point to determine the relevance or non-relevance of a search query result, and to parse the results according to their determined relevance before presenting the filtered results to the group user. In particular, amended independent claim 13 (and similarly independent claims 1, 22, 29, 34, 42, and 43) recites *a filter component that parses relevant and non-relevant general-purpose search engine results based on training data associated with the entry point that provides a link employed to traverse to the general-purpose search engine.*

On page 13 of the Office Action the Examiner asserts that Lawrence discloses a filter component that parses relevant and non-relevant general-purpose search engine content results depending on the entry point used to access the general-purpose search engine. However, as discussed *supra* with respect to independent claim 1, Lawrence fails to teach or suggest a filtering component that acts upon the search query *results* obtained by a general-purpose search engine based on an entry point. Rather, the Inquiris 2 system disclosed in Lawrence transforms the search *query* prior to submitting the modified query to the general-purpose search engine.

No parsing is performed on the subsequent *results* obtained by the general-purpose search engine. Since Lawrence does not teach or suggest parsing the *results* obtained by a general-purpose search engine, the cited art is therefore silent regarding a filtering component that performs this type of parsing. Hansen *et al.* is likewise silent regarding this aspect of the subject claims. Hansen *et al.* discloses a method by which search-related navigation data is captured during a search session and used to build groups of related queries. These “query clusters” assist in identifying relevant URLs during subsequent related search sessions. However, the search model disclosed in Hansen *et al.* does not teach or suggest that the results are *first obtained by a general-purpose search engine, and then sent to a filtering component for parsing*. Rather, Hansen’s model matches a search query with related query clusters, and presents the relevant URLs associated with those clusters as results.

The subject claims also teach that the filtering component can be provided with training data consisting of a data set relevant to the desired search context, and *a data set unrelated to the desired search context (a non-relevant data set)*. The filtering component compares search query results with both the relevant *and the non-relevant* data sets to determine if the result is relevant to the user. In particular, amended independent claim 29 (and similarly independent claim 34 and dependent claims 10, 16, 18, 31, 33, 36, 38, and 40) recites *providing a set of non-relevant data to train the component to discern query results unrelated to the search context*. As conceded in the Office action, Lawrence fails to disclose this feature of the subject claims. The Examiner cites Hansen *et al.* to make up for this deficiency in Lawrence, citing in particular Hansen’s method of introducing and assigning URL data to query groups based on the URL’s determined relevance to those groups. However, Hansen *et al.* merely discloses a search method that links a given search query with groups of *related*, previously executed queries and their associated *relevant* URL data. The Examiner contends that query group data that is non-relevant to a search context is used to discern query results non-relevant to a search context of a user. However, this is not the case. Hansen teaches that only the query groups that are *relevant* to a search query are referenced when determining which results to present to the user. Query groups and associated data that are *non-relevant* to the search context *take no active role* in the decision-making process. Thus, Hansen *et al.*, alone or in combination with Lawrence, is silent regarding a set of non-relevant data that discerns query results unrelated to the search context.

In addition, the subject claims teach a method for *automatically recording* the relevant and non-relevant training data sets during a search session. When a user selects one of the search query results presented by the tuning component, that result is recorded by the training component as relevant to the search context, while results that had been ranked higher than the selected result are recorded as non-relevant to the search context. In particular, independent claim 34 recites *a method to automatically customize a general-purpose search engine for an entry point, comprising...recording higher ranked query results as non-relevant, when a lower ranked result is selected by the user.* As conceded on page 35 of the Office Action, Lawrence fails to disclose this aspect of the subject claims. The Examiner cites Hansen *et al.* to make up for this deficiency in Lawrence, citing in particular Hansen's reference to the PageRank algorithm. Hansen notes that "PageRank is based on the amount of time a 'random surfer' would spend on each page." On page 35 of the Office Action, in regard to this reference to PageRank, the Examiner contends that spending time on a given web page increases that page's relevancy, while at the same time decreasing the relevancy of other pages. While this observation may be true in the abstract, it in no way teaches or suggests *recording* the unselected web pages as non-relevant, nor does it teach using these non-relevant results to train a filtering component. The claimed invention as recited in independent claim 34 provides a method for both recording the unselected, but higher-ranked, search query results as non-relevant, and using the resulting non-relevant data sets to automatically train a filtering component to discern which results are non-relevant to the search context. Lawrence and Hansen *et al.*, alone or in combination, are silent regarding this feature of the subject claims.

In view of at least the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that Lawrence and Hansen *et al.*, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest applicant's claimed subject matter as recited in independent claims 13, 22, 29, 34, 42, and 43 (and claims respectively depending there from), and thus fail to make obvious the subject claimed invention. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP444US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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